

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L L E N I N G R A D 00170

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE, SHUM, PINT, SCUL, UR
SUBJECT: LENINGRAD CULTURAL ACTIVIST EXPELLED FROM
WRITERS' UNION

REF: (A)77 LENINGRAD 1542, (B) 77 LENINGRAD 136

1. LENINGRAD CULTURAL ACTIVIST, VADIM NECHAYEV, HAS REPORTED TO CONGEN HIS EXPULSION ON DECEMBER 26 FROM THE SOVIET UNION OF WRITERS FOR HIS RECENT ACTIVISM. HE HAS PROVIDED CONGEN COPIES OF PROTOCOL OF MEETING AT WHICH HIS EXPULSION WAS ANNOUNCED AND HIS OPEN LETTER OF PROTEST TO THE UNION. (POUCHED DEPARTMENT). ACCORDING TO PROTOCOL, NECHAYEV WAS EXPELLED FOR ACTIVITIES INCONSISTENT WITH UNION STATUTES: VIZ PUBLICATION OF UNDERGROUND "ARKHIV" OF UNOFFICIAL ART, DECLARATIONS DEFAMING STATE CULTURAL POLICY, AND ORGANIZATION OF ART EXHIBIT IN SUPPORT OF "ANTI-SOVIET" BIENNALE '77 ART FESTIVAL IN VENICE.

2. NECHAYEV HAS BEEN ACTIVE FOR SOME TIME IN ORGANIZING EXHIBITIONS OF UNOFFICIAL ART AT HIS APARTMENT -- THE SERIES OF WHICH HE CALLS THE "MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART" -- AND IN EDITING A SAMIZDAT JOURNAL OF UNOFFICIAL ART.
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IN ADDITION, HE HAS ALSO RECENTLY PUBLISHED ABROAD. HE SHOWED CONGENOFF ISSUE NO. 18 OF THE ISRAELI RUSSIAN LANGUAGE JOURNAL VREYYA I MIR WHICH CARRIES ITEMS BY HIMSELF AND BY HIS WIFE MARINA NEBROBOVA.

3. HIS "OPEN LETTER" TO THE WRITERS' UNION VINDICATES HIS CALLING AS DISSIDENT WRITER AND DEFENDER OF UNOFFICIAL

ART, ATTACKS STATE CULTURAL POLICIES WHICH SILENCE DARING TALENTS, AND DISCLOSES CULTURAL AUTHORITIES' ACCUSATIONS OF HIS BEING QUOTE IDEOLOGIST AND LEADER OF THE SECOND CULTURE END QUOTE AND THEIR THREATS OF COMPULSORY ' EMIGRATION OR PSYCHIATRIC INCARCERATION.'

4. IN OTHER ACTIONS, LOCAL ARTIST YURI PETROCHENKOV ALSO HAS REPORTED BEING THREATENED BY KGB WITH PSYCHIATRIC INCARCERATION IF HE CONTINUES TO SEND PROTESTS TO HIGHER AUTHORITIES HERE AND ABROAD.

5. MEANWHILE, LOCAL CULTURAL AUTHORITIES ARE CONTINUING TO RELEASE STEAM AND HOPEFULLY COAX NON-OFFICIALS TO TAKE LESS POLITICALLY DEMONSTRATIVE DIRECTIONS BY OFFERING OCCASIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO EXHIBIT NON-OFFICIAL ART. THE PERIOD BETWEEN SUCH SHOWINGS HERE, HOWEVER, IS BEING DRAGGED OUT TO INCREASINGLY LONG INTERVALS. THE LENINGRAD CULTURAL DIRECTORATE HAS RECENTLY APPROVED A SHOWING FOR NON-OFFICIAL ABSTRACT ARTIST EVGENIY MIKHNOV-VOYTENKO WHICH OPENED ON JANUARY 14 AT THE SOMEWHAT HIDDEN AWAY DZERZHINSKY HOUSE OF CULTURE. MIKHNOV-VOYTENKO, WHOSE WORK IS POLITICALLY UNOBJECTIONABLE, HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN AT THE ORDZHONIKIDZE HOUSE OF CULTURE IN SUMMER 1976. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER, THE LAST UN-OFFICIAL EXHIBITION AUTHORIZED BY CULTURAL DIRECTORATE OFFICIALS HERE WAS ANATOLIY BELKIN'S SHOW WHICH OPENED CONFIDENTIAL

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JUNE 6, 1977, ALSO AT THE DZERZHINSKY HOUSE OF CULTURE. AN EXHIBITION BY POLITICALLY AWARE VOLODYA OVCHINNIKOV SCHEDULED FOR LAST MAY IN THE YUSUPOV PALACE WAS FIRST DELAYED, AND FINALLY CANCELLED IN LATE JUNE AFTER SHOCKED CULTURAL DIRECTORATE OFFICIALS SAW WHAT HE INTENDED TO HANG.

COMMENT: NECHAYEV, HAS ASSUMED THE ROLE OF LEADING PATRON OF UNOFFICIAL ARTISTS HERE FORMERLY PLAYED BY NATALIYA KAZARINOVA. HE IS THE LATEST ACTIVIST IN LENINGRAD TO FALL VICTIM TO THE POLICY OF PUTTING GREAT PRESSURE ON THE MOST PROMINENT LEADERS OF DISSENT TO EMIGRATE. AMONG THOSE PERMITTED OR FORCED TO EMIGRATE IN THE PAST HALF YEAR OR SO WERE KAZARINOVA HERSELF, ILYA LEVIN, LENINGRAD REPRESENTATIVE OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, EMMA SOTNIKOVA, LENINGRAD EDITOR OF JEW IN USSR, DAVID DAR, A PROMINENT CONTRIBUTOR TO THAT JOURNAL AND GITANNA SADOVNIKOVA, A LOCAL ACTIVIST WITH CLOSE TIES TO LITHUANIAN DISSIDENTS. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT HARDLINING LENINGRAD PARTY CHIEF AND POLITBURO MEMBER ROMANOV HEARTILY APPROVES, NECHAYEV TOLD US THAT THE ORDER FOR HIS EXPULSION ACTUALLY CAME FROM MOSCOW UNION HEADQUARTERS.

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